

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated July 16, 2003 (Paper No. 13). Claims 1 to 36 are presented for examination, of which Claims 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 30, 31, 35 and 36 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

As to a formal matter, the Office Action objected to Claim 32 as being unclear (page 8, paragraph 7). Claim 32 has been amended for additional clarity. Withdrawal of the objection and further examination of the application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,271,805 (Yonezawa) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,621,429 (Yamaashi). Claims 31, 35 and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 5,819,048 (Okazaki). Claims 32 and 34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Okazaki and further in view of Yonezawa. Claim 33 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Okazaki. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Independent Claim 1 recites a communication apparatus that comprises reception means for receiving images generated from a plurality of communication terminals, output means for outputting the images received by the reception means in order to display the images on a display unit as multiple images, and notification means for acquiring and notifying of a state of distribution of the images by the reception means while the reception means is receiving the images, wherein the state of distribution comprises information relating to an actual frame rate of the images being received by the reception means.

Independent Claims 8 and 29 are method and storage medium claims, respectively, that generally correspond to independent Claim 1.

Independent Claim 15 recites a communication apparatus that includes a reception means for receiving a part or all of images generated from image generation units of a plurality of corresponding communication terminals by switching the images, output means for outputting the images received by the reception means in order to display the images on a display unit as multiple images, assigning means for assigning an arbitrary image from among the multiple images, control means for controlling a state of outputting of the image assigned by the assigning means, and notification means for acquiring and notifying of a state of distribution of the images by the reception means while the reception means is receiving the images, wherein the state of distribution comprises information relating to an actual frame rate of the images being received by the reception means.

Independent Claims 22 and 30 are method and storage medium claims, respectively, that generally correspond to independent Claim 15.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 and 30, and in particular, is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of notification means for acquiring and notifying of a state of distribution of the images by the reception means while the reception means is receiving the images, wherein the state of distribution comprises information relating to an actual frame rate of the images being received by the reception means.

Yonezawa relates to a communication apparatus and method. Yonezawa discloses a monitoring terminal 60 having map management software 413 which displays the panning and zooming states of the cameras with maps and camera symbols. The map

management software 413 is always notified of information indicating the state of the camera (e.g. panning/tilting, zooming) from the video reception software 412.

As acknowledged in the Office Action (page 3, paragraph 1), Yonezawa fails to teach the state of distribution, which relates to information relating to a frame rate, and further fails to teach notification means for changing display information in accordance with a frame rate. Applicants submit that Yonezawa also fails to teach the feature of notification means for acquiring and notifying of a state of distribution of the images by the reception means while the reception means is receiving the images, wherein the state of distribution comprises information relating to an actual frame rate of the images being received by the reception means.

Yamaashi relates to a video data display controlling method and video data display processing system. Yamaashi discloses that the display quality/specification of an image (including the number of frames per unit time) is automatically changed in accordance with a user interest degree. The user interest degree is determined by an interest degree determining unit 207. Further, the frame rate can be manually changed by a user using, e.g., a frame number scaler 503 displayed by a video data display controller 205. However, when the display specifications are changed either automatically or manually, these changes merely reflect the desired settings and do not necessarily reflect the actual frame rate achieved, which may be limited by the transfer capacity of the communications path. Therefore, Applicants submit that there is no suggestion in Yamaashi of a notification means for acquiring and notifying of a state of distribution of the images by the reception means while the reception means is receiving the images, wherein the state of distribution comprises information relating to an actual frame rate of the images being received by the reception means.

The Office Action, at page 3, contends that Yamaashi teaches keeping track of the “frame rate” of the received image data based on the bandwidth capacity, and the changes in the display information in accordance to the bandwidth capacity. The Office Action further states that Yamaashi teach notifying and changing the display information in accordance to high and low priority of image area interests. That is, the notifying step displays information based on desired settings. The present invention, on the other hand, acquires and notifies a state of distribution of the images, where the state of distribution includes relating to an actual frame rate of the images.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1, 25, 22, 29 and 30 are allowable over the applied art.

Independent Claim 31 recites a communication apparatus that comprises a reception unit for receiving images generated from a communication terminal, an output unit for outputting the images received by the reception unit in order to display the images on a display unit, and a notification unit for acquiring and notifying of a state of reception of the reception unit, the state of reception comprising a state of frame rate of the images received by the reception unit while the reception unit is receiving the images. The notification unit causes the display unit to display an image information of the state of frame rate corresponding to the images from the communication terminal, which image information is different from the images received by the reception unit and displayed on the display unit, and notifies of the state of frame rate by changing the image information on the basis of the state of reception of the reception unit. The notification unit also causes the display unit to display the image information of the state of the frame rate together with the received images, and not to display the image information when the received images are not displayed.

Independent Claims 35 and 36 are method and storage medium claims, respectively, that generally correspond to independent Claim 31.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 31, 35 and 36, and in particular, is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature that the notification unit causes the display unit to display the image information of the state of the frame rate together with the received images, and not to display the image information when the received images are not displayed.

Okazaki relates to an image data processing apparatus that transmits data in accordance with a reception rate. As shown in Figure 12, Okazaki teaches that the frame rate of a transmission module of a motion image and the reception rates of motion pictures and audio sounds can be shown in a display. However, Okazaki does not teach or suggest that the notification unit causes the display unit to display the image information of the state of the frame rate together with the received images, and not to display the image information when the received images are not displayed.

According to the present invention, the notification unit causes image information of the state of the frame to be displayed together with the received images. The notification unit also limits the displaying of image information to situations where the received images are displayed. Okazaki, on the other hand, teaches that frame rate and reception rate information is displayed in a window of a user interface module. Okazaki is not seen to indicate that the frame rates and reception rates are displayed together with received images.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that independent Claims 31, 35 and 36 are allowable over the applied art.

The other claims in the application are each dependent from the independent claims and are believed to be allowable over the applied references for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

No other matters being raised, it is believed that the entire application is fully in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


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